

Lighted up for the holidays



The 46th annual Downtown Partnership's lighting of the Washington Monument in Mount Vernon Square opened the holiday season in Baltimore with music and a fireworks display Thursday evening.

LLOYD FOX/BALTIMORE SUN

UB to cut pay as enrollment falls

Two-week furloughs, hiring freeze, travel restrictions aimed at saving money

By TALIA RICHMAN
The Baltimore Sun

Faced with falling enrollment, the University of Baltimore has cut nearly 400 employees' salaries to save money. The school made the cuts by furloughing workers — requiring them to take time off without pay — as part of a larger effort to reduce costs that includes a hiring freeze, out-of-state travel restrictions and limits on departmental spending. The university announced the furlough plan at the start of the fall semester. It requires both faculty and staff members to take a certain number of unpaid days off, based on their salary level. Those making between \$80,000 and \$100,000, for example, must take six furlough days reducing their pay by 2.3 percent. See **UB**, page 11



The University of Baltimore's Business Center building on Mount Royal Avenue is part of its Midtown-Belvedere campus.

KENNETH K. LAM/BALTIMORE SUN

Congress OKs spending bill to avoid shutdown

Temporary funding measure sets up another battle

By JOHN FRITZE
The Baltimore Sun

WASHINGTON — Lawmakers approved a short-term spending bill Thursday to avoid a weekend shutdown of the federal government even as they set up a potentially more contentious battle that will fall just days before Christmas.

Hours before government funding was set to expire, the House voted mostly along party lines to pass a stopgap measure to keep federal agencies open through Dec. 22. The Senate, moving with unusual haste, backed the bill about an hour later. The legislation was aimed at buying



Cummings

congressional leaders more time to craft a bill to fund the government through September, but it underscored the challenges Republicans face in trying to appease conservatives within their ranks while also courting support from Democrats they may need for a final bill.

“The parties are going in opposite directions,” said Rep. Elijah E. Cummings, a Baltimore Democrat who opposed the bill. “I think it’s going to be hard.”

Voting in the House and Senate capped a rush of activity Thursday in which Republican and Democratic leaders met See **CONGRESS**, page 9

Even newer forms of birth control can increase breast cancer risks

By ANDREA K. MCDANIELS
The Baltimore Sun

A major new study has found that even birth control pills and other contraceptives that release low doses of hormones increase the risk of breast cancer in women. While the link between hormonal birth control and breast cancer has been known for years, many doctors and women had hoped that newer forms of birth control, such as IUDs, vaginal rings and implants, put women at less risk.

The study by researchers from the University of Copenhagen, which followed 1.8 million Danish women for more than a decade, found that differences in the formulation of hormone-based birth control had little effect on the cancer risk. The study also found that the risk of cancer increased the longer a woman used the birth control. Overall, the breast cancer risk was 20 percent higher for women who were currently using or had recently used hormonal contraceptives than among See **CANCER**, page 11

Oaks probe dates to 2014

Newly unsealed filings detail investigation of state senator by FBI

By JUSTIN FENTON
The Baltimore Sun

The FBI began investigating Democratic state Sen. Nathaniel Oaks in 2014, according to court documents unsealed in the federal corruption case against him.

Oaks, 71, was added as a subject of an ongoing public corruption investigation that August, an FBI agent wrote in a January affidavit unsealed this week.

He was added, the agent wrote, “based on historical reporting that Oaks was associated with individuals who were involved in illegal activities, and that Oaks had inappropriately accepted money and other things of value from businesspersons and lobbyists in his capacity as a state delegate.”

While the full scope of the investigation remains unknown, the documents identify for the first time one person who allegedly conspired with Oaks: a Maryland businessman named Bruce Crockett, described as a longtime associate of Oaks.

Crockett, who public records show owned a Baltimore County auto body shop and a management company, died in a motorcycle crash in July at the age of 59, Baltimore County police reported at the time.

“It takes money,” Crockett said when asked in a recorded meeting with an FBI cooperator, disclosed in the affidavit, about how to go about dealing with Baltimore politicians such as Oaks. “They’re all about cash, man. ... I’ve done it too many times.”

Oaks has been charged with bribery, wire See **OAKS**, page 11



Oaks

SUMMARY OF THE NEWS

NATION & WORLD

FRANKEN TO RESIGN: Minnesota Sen. Al Franken said Thursday that he will resign from Congress in coming weeks following a wave of sexual misconduct allegations and the collapse of support from his Democratic colleagues. **NEWS PG 8**

TODAY'S WEATHER

CLOUDY AND COLD

43
HIGH

27
LOW



Partly sunny Saturday **SPORTS PG 14**



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